# THE LAMP

'68

THE PAPYRUS

PUBLISHED BY THE STUDENTS OF

PEACE COLLEGE

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

SPRING, 1968

## STAFF AND CONTRIBUTORS

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| EDITORIAL STAFF: | DONNA HOOVER<br>BETH LAWRENCE<br>SUSAN LOMAX<br>JUNE STAFFORD<br>ALICE WILSON |
| CONTRIBUTORS: | PENNY BALL<br>SUSAN HALL<br>SUSAN HARRELSON<br>DONNA HOOVER<br>CATHEY RODGERS '66<br>JUNE STAFFORD<br>SANDRA STOOS<br>SUSAN VIA<br>ALICE WILSON |
| COVER DESIGN: | SALLY MARION |
| ADVISOR: | MARY POGUE SCHWERTMAN |

POETRY

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## SWEET SPRINGS AGO

SWEET SPRINGS AGO WHEN YOUNG WAS I,
MARVELING TENDER BUTTERFLIES,
SWINGING ON SWINGS OF VINE-PEELED TREES,
AND CAPTURING GOLDEN TUMBLING LEAVES,

BRIGHT COPPER DANDELIONS CARESSED MY FACE;
I WAS QUICK TO WONDER AT A SPIDER'S RAIN-
CLEANED LACE.
LANGUIDLY I LAY IN LETTUCE-CRISP GRASSES
WHILE GAZING AT SKIES OF BLUEBELL MASSES.

*Susan Via*

## HAIKU

TIME CLOSES UPON ME.
IT SHARPLY LIMITS MY MOVEMENTS.
TIME STEALS MY FREEDOM.

Donna Hoover

## HAIKU

FLASHING COLOR LIGHTS
BLINKING IN AN AURA OF FRENZY . . .
MAD HYSTERIC MOMENTS.

Alice Wilson

## POEM

EVERYONE
IN THE DARKNESS
WAS LUMINESCENT

BUT
I
COULD NOT SEE.

A DOOR
OPENED

LIGHT
FLOWED
IN
AROUND THE SHADOW

LIKE THE STARS
OF THE NIGHT
THEY FADED

WITH
THE
MORNING SUN.

Alice Wilson

## NORMAN

WITH HIS DEEP BROWN PENSIVE EYES, NORMAN THINKS.
THOUGH HE HAS A SLEEPY LOOK INSCRIBED UPON HIS
COUNTENANCE AND WALKS THE TRACK OF A SOMNAMBU-
LIST, HE SENSES LIFE, HOLDING IT INWARD.

NERM LAUGHS AT LIFE'S "GRUNDY" REALITIES,
TO RELEASE HIS EXPRESSIONS.
I FEEL A SURGE OF LIGHT-HEARTEDNESS STIMULATED
BY HIS DANCING EYES AS THEY OPEN TO THE SUNLIGHT.
THE WORLD FEELS FRESH, AS A BLUE SMILE RIPPLES
ACROSS HIS FACE.

*Donna Hoover*

## SPRING, THE REBIRTH OF SEASONS

SPRING, THE REBIRTH OF SEASONS FLOWN,
WILL WHISPER INTO NIGHTS AN ENDLESS SONG,
FROM BABES' SWEET BREATH SHE WILL BORROW
MELLOW WARMTH FOR HER TOMORROW.

CLOTHED IN GREEN, A SILHOUETTE IN BLUE,
HER RHAPSODY, A FICKLE TUNE,
IN RAYS OF GOLD HER LAUGHTER MENDS
WHEN LUSTFUL SUMMER'S SONG BEGINS.

Susan Hall

## HAIKU

GREEN FLEETING SHADOWS
PLAY HIDE AND SEEK IN THE FOREST . . .
AH, MY ELFIN FRIENDS.

Alice Wilson

## HAIKU

NATURE SPREADS HER GOWN
TO COVER EARTH'S BREAST WITH GREEN,
SPREADING VERDANT LIFE.

Donna Hoover

## FLIGHT

ALIEN TO THE MISTS OF CENTURIES,
A PLANE TRESPASSES INTO THE DARK NIGHT.

SWATHED IN COOLNESS AND STARS
THIS MYSTERY OF MOTION
SMOOTHES A PATH THROUGH THE PROVINCE OF A CLOUD
AND LEAVES NO WAKE --
GLIDES SILENTLY OVER SLEEPING LAND
LIKE AN ANGEL OF DEATH.

Cathey Rodgers, Peace '66

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## POEM

YOU ARE REBORN TODAY. . . . . .

BEHOLD!
THE WORLD
IN ALL
ITS AWESOME SPLENDOR!

DANCE
TO
THE MUSIC
OF THE GENTLY CARESSING ZEPHYRS.

SING!
WITH A JOY
THAT FILLS THE HEART
WITH A THIRST FOR LIFE!

SLEEP!
WITH GENTLE DREAMS
AND DISCOVER
PEACE OF MIND.

DIE . . . . . .
WITH THE SUNSET.

Alice Wilson

## POEM

THE BRISK WIND
SHOCKED OUR DEPRESSION
LIKE A LAUGHING SPIRIT.

Penny Ball

## HAIKU

KINDNESS IN THE HEART
HIDES AN EVERLASTING LOVE
FOR ALL FELLOWMEN.

June Stafford

## THE CLOCK

STOP! THE TIME IS NOW,
SCREAMED THE CLOCK,
GO NOWHERE --
YOU ARE CONSUMED!

THE PEERING EYE
GAZED HYPNOTICALLY,
LONG ARMS GRAPPLED --
THE VICTIM STOOD STONED.

WHITE FACE OF DEATH
WITH SMIRKING TEETH --
WAITS TO TASTE
HIS MASSACRE.

TRIUMPHANT ECHOES
OF ITS POUNDING METAL HEART
SHATTERED THE STILLNESS OF A SLUMBER
AS ITS GRIN PIERCED THE GAPING CASKET.

Alice Wilson

# PROSE

# MY PICTURE

IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO, MANY YEARS AGO, IT SEEMS, BUT THE PICTURE IS STILL THERE, SAFELY LOCKED IN MY MIND. IT IS A PICTURE OF SUNSHINE AND A BRIGHT BLUE SKY FILLED WITH SOFT WHITE CLOUDS AND SPARKLING WATER, MY OWN TREASURE OF BRILLIANT DIAMONDS. THERE IS MY OWN PRIVATE BEACH, TOO, WHERE I CAN RUN FOREVER THROUGH THE SEA OATS AND THE MARSHGRASS AND LOSE MYSELF IN A TROPICAL WORLD OF AN ENCHANTED ISLAND.

AND I DID RUN THROUGH THE WATER AND THE KNEE-DEEP MARSHGRASS, AND THE MUD THAT GUSHED BETWEEN MY TOES FELT COOL AND SMOOTH, LIKE COLD CHOCOLATE PIE ON A HOT SUMMER DAY. THERE WAS ONLY ONE DANGER, THE OYSTERS. I WOULD HAVE TO BE VERY CAREFUL IN MY JOURNEYS, TO AVOID THEIR RAZOR-SHARP PROTECTIONS. YET EVEN WHEN I STEPPED TOO QUICKLY AND THE BLOOD FLOWED FREELY FROM A CUT ON MY FOOT INTO A GENTLE, ABSORBENT BANDAGE OF MUD AND WATER, I COULD NOT HATE THEM. THEY WERE MY FRIENDS, A PART OF MY PRIVATE WORLD INTO WHICH NO ONE ELSE COULD EVER ENTER. INSIDE THEIR SHELLS WAS A SOFT, SWEET EXISTENCE, BUT ALAS, THEIR RAZOR-SHARP COVERINGS WERE NOT IMPENETRABLE. MAN, THE DREADED ENEMY, WOULD APPEAR AND CRUELLY FORCE HIMSELF INTO THEIR SOLITARY EXISTENCE AND TEAR THEM FOREVER FROM A WORLD OF COMFORT AND SWEET SECLUSION. HOW UNSUSPECTING AND INNOCENT I WAS THEN, AS I VAINLY SOUGHT TO PROTECT MY FRIENDS FROM AN ENEMY WHO WAS SOON TO CUNNINGLY DESTROY MY WORLD, TOO.

I WAS VERY YOUNG THEN, AND MY WHOLE WORLD WAS THE TOTAL AWARENESS OF THE FORCES OF MY ENVIRONMENT. AND MY WHOLE ENVIRONMENT WAS A STRETCH OF SAND AND MARSHGRASS AND MUD AND THE CAPE FEAR RIVER AS IT RAN SWIFTLY PAST ME AND PAST BOTANY ISLAND AND PAST BALDHEAD ISLAND

ONWARD IN ITS FINAL LAP TO THE SEA. THIS WAS MY OWN PRIVATE ISLAND -- ALTHOUGH IT WASN'T REALLY AN ISLAND --,MY WORLD OF FREEDOM, ADVENTURE, AND HAPPINESS WHERE EVERY DAY BROUGHT SOMETHING NEW. I REMEMBER THE TIME WHEN THE SEA GULL, THE LITTLE ONE WITH THE BROKEN WING, WAS LYING ON THE SAND. I VERY CAREFULLY MADE A BED FOR HIM OUT OF SEAWEED AND PACKED IT DOWN WITH MUD. THEN I GENTLY PLACED HIM IN IT. I BROUGHT HIM SOME WATER AND A PIECE OF CAKE FROM HOME, BUT HE WOULDN'T EAT ANYTHING. IF I COULD ONLY TAKE HIM HOME WITH ME, I THOUGHT. THEN THE NEXT DAY HE DIED. I REMEMBER THAT I WAS VERY SAD THAT DAY, UNTIL I BEGAN TO THINK. AND ALL AT ONCE I KNEW THAT HE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN HAPPY IN THAT OTHER WORLD. IF HE COULD NOT LIVE IN MY WORLD, THEN HE WOULD BE HAPPIER IN HEAVEN. AFTER THAT I WASN'T SAD ANY MORE.

THERE WERE CRABS AND TURTLES AND SANDFIDDLERS ON MY ISLAND, TOO. I THINK I LIKED THE SAD SANDFIDDLERS BEST. THEY WERE MY FRIENDS, AND SOMETIMES, IF I WAS VERY FAST, THEY WOULD LET ME PICK THEM UP AND I WOULD PUT THEM IN MY JAR OF SAND AND WATCH THEM DIG SWIFTLY TO THE BOTTOM. BUT I NEVER LEFT THEM TOO LONG; SOON I LET THEM RUN TO THEIR HOMES ON THE MOUND IN THE MARSH, WHERE THE MUD BEGINS. I UNDERSTOOD. THEY HAD TO BE FREE. THEY WERE MADE TO BE FREE, JUST AS I WAS.

YES, I WAS FREE, FREE TO RUN AS FAST AS THE WATER BESIDE ME, FREE TO SING OR SPEAK OR LAUGH FOR NO REASON AT ALL. NO ONE COULD HEAR ME, JUST MY FRIENDS, AND THEY WOULDN'T TELL. SOMETIMES THEY WOULD EVEN LAUGH WITH ME. I COULD HEAR THEM, BUT I WAS THE ONLY ONE.

THEN ONE DAY SOME BOYS AND GIRLS CAME TO MY ISLAND AND WANTED ME TO PLAY WITH THEM. OF COURSE I TOLD THEM NO. HOW COULD I LEAVE MY FRIENDS? THEY NEEDED ME AND I NEEDED THEM, TOO. HOW COULD I BE FREE WITH OTHER PEOPLE? THEN MY

SECRET ISLAND WOULD NO LONGER BE MINE ALONE. SO I WENT AWAY TO THE EDGE OF THE WATER AND CAREFULLY MADE MY WAY TO THE SECURITY OF THE OYSTER BED. BUT IT WAS GONE! THEY WERE GONE! ONLY A FEW BROKEN SHELLS AND DEEP BLACK HOLES WERE LEFT IN THE MUD, DEEP BLACK HOLES FILLED WITH MURKY WATER. OH, HOW ALONE I FELT. THEN I HEARD THE BOYS AND GIRLS CALLING TO ME FROM THE BEACH. THERE WAS LAUGHTER IN THEIR VOICES, AND THE SAND LOOKED VERY WHITE AND WARM. SLOWLY I MADE MY WAY TO THEM THROUGH THE THICK GOOEY BLACK THAT STUCK TO MY FEET, TRYING TO HOLD ME BACK. I SEEMED TO BE UNAWARE OF EVERYTHING EXCEPT THEIR LIGHT, HAPPY VOICES. SOON I FELT THE WARM SMOOTH SAND UNDER MY FEET. I WAS SAFE. AT THAT MOMENT I REALIZED, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THAT THESE BOYS AND GIRLS WERE REALITY, AND MY SECRET WORLD WAS ONLY FANTASY AND MAKE-BELIEVE. SO I JOINED THEM IN THEIR GAMES.

NOW I AM OLDER, BUT I STILL REMEMBER MY SECRET ISLAND. YES, THE PICTURE COMES MORE AND MORE OFTEN NOW. I GUESS IT'S BECAUSE I REALIZE SOMETHING ELSE, SOMETHING THAT I ONCE HAD WHICH IS NOW LOST FOREVER. THE FREEDOM, THE COMPLETE, PERFECT FREEDOM OF MY SECRET PLACE IS GONE. YES, I HAVE FRIENDS NOW AND AM NEVER ALONE ON AN ISLAND OF SOLITUDE. . . . YET SOMETIMES I WONDER, AM I?

*Susan Harrelson*

# I AM ALIVE!

WHAT IS THERE ABOUT A MOUSE, A SINGLE DAISY, A VACANT LOT, THAT EXCITES THE IMAGINATION OF A CHILD? IN YOUR ASKING, YOU HAVE REVEALED HOW UTTERLY LOST YOU ARE TO THE WORLD OF FANTASY WHICH I ENJOY AND THRIVE UPON. YOU WERE ME ONCE. WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU? THE VACANT LOT, AS YOU CALL IT, IS MY KINGDOM, MY REFUGE, MY SANCTUARY. I CAN TALK TO A CATERPILLAR SLIDING THROUGH THE PUNGENT LEAVES. I CAN TURN A ROCK ON ITS SIDE AND SEE A THRIVING COMMUNITY PANIC-STRICKEN IN THE FACE OF IMPENDING DISASTER, I CAN PICK A BOUQUET FROM THE CHOICEST OF THE MAY FLOWERS AT MY FEET, AND CARRY IT HOME IN TRIUMPH TO MY MOTHER. I CAN HIDE BEHIND A BUSH AND WATCH THE ENDLESS ACTIVITY OF THE LITTLE BROWN AND GREY SQUIRRELS SCURRYING TO GATHER THEIR HOARDS OF NUTS AGAINST THE ONCOMING WINTER. WHAT CAN YOU DO? THIS IS MY ENCHANTED KINGDOM, OVER WHICH I AM SOLE SOVEREIGN. WHAT IS YOURS?

I PITY YOU, OH GROWN-UP. DO YOU FIND IT ALL-CONSUMING TO WATCH THE ACTIVITY OF THE DROPS OF RAIN FALLING OFF A LEAF? DO YOU FIND HAPPINESS IN TURNING A LADY-BUG RIGHT SIDE UP AFTER IT HAS SOMEHOW MANAGED TO TUMBLE HOPELESSLY OVER ON ITS BACK? DO YOU SOMETIMES TAKE OFF YOUR SHOES AND STOCKINGS, AND SIMPLY RUN AND RUN AS FAST AS YOU CAN UNTIL YOU FALL DOWN LAUGHING WITH THE AWARENESS THAT YOU ARE ALIVE? I DO NOT THINK SO.

LIFE IS STILL SO NEW TO ME. IT IS PREGNANT WITH DISCOVERY, HOPES, LAUGHTER, AND AWAKENING. MY ENTIRE BEING IS CHARGED WITH AWARENESS OF IT. DO YOU FEEL LIFE? YOU COULD NOT FEEL IT AS I DO, BECAUSE YOU HAVE LIVED LONGER; YOU HAVE STARTED TO TAKE IT FOR GRANTED. DON'T YOU KNOW THE GREAT LOSS YOU SUFFERED AT THE FIRST MOMENT WHEN YOU NEGLECTED IT?

I HAVE A FORT IN THE VERY MIDDLE OF MY KINGDOM. I MADE IT MYSELF. IT WAS LOVINGLY PUT TOGETHER WITH PIECES OF BOARDS, BITS OF STRING, FALL LEAVES, RANDOM BRANCHES, ALL OF WHICH WERE FOUND IN MY KINGDOM. WHEN I AM THERE I FEEL COMPLETELY AND UTTERLY SECURE AND SAFE. DO YOU EVER FEEL THIS WAY? ALL THE GREATEST TREASURES OF MY KINGDOM ARE GATHERED AROUND ME IN MY FORT. AMONG THEM IS AN ACORN THAT FELL ON MY HEAD FROM THE NEST OF A SQUIRREL OVERHEAD, THE MOST BEAUTIFUL LEAF IN THE WORLD, A COLLECTION OF ASSORTED PEBBLES AND ROCKS THAT I COLLECTED WITH LOVING CARE, A RUSTY SCREW THAT FURNISHES ME HOURS OF WONDER AS TO HOW IT GOT HERE AND TO WHOM IT BELONGED. I HAVE THE FEATHER OF A PHEASANT WHO ONCE LIVED HERE. DO YOU TAKE TIME TO FIND TREASURES SUCH AS THESE, GROWN-UP?

I CAN BE ANYTHING ON EARTH THAT I WISH TO BE IN MY KINGDOM. TODAY I DISCOVER FAIRY LAND, TOMORROW I WILL BE AN INDIAN PRINCESS, YESTERDAY I WAS A SCIENTIST. WHEN I AM A SCIENTIST I MIX UP LOVELY POTIONS. I HAVE A LITTLE PAIL IN MY FORT WHICH I FILL WITH JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF DIRT, A SPECIFIC NUMBER OF CRUSHED LEAVES, THE PETALS OF FLOWERS, A FEW WEEDS WHICH I CRUSH INTO MY POTION, AND, IF IT HAS JUST RAINED, A LITTLE WATER FROM A NEARBY PUDDLE. THEN I MIX IT UP WITH A HELPFUL TWIG, AND INSTANTLY I AM THE RULER OF THE UNIVERSE. DO YOU MIX POTIONS?

EVERY MORNING AFTER I HAVE EATEN MY BREAKFAST, WASHED MY FACE, AND BRUSHED MY TEETH, I MAKE AN INSPECTION TOUR OF MY KINGDOM. IT IS JUST AS I LEFT IT. THEN I JOURNEY DEEP INTO THE HEART OF MY SUMAC JUNGLE WHERE I HAVE CLEVERLY HIDDEN MY FORT. I START TO SING AND LAUGH AND HUG MYSELF WITH JOY. AFTER I THINK I CAN BEAR TO SIT DOWN FOR A MINUTE, I TAKE OUT FROM BENEATH MY BLOUSE SOME PAPER AND A WORN-DOWN PENCIL. TODAY I AM GOING TO BE AN AUTHORESS AND TELL THE WORLD OF MY GLORIOUS KINGDOM. I

START TO WRITE WITH INTENSE CONCENTRATION UNTIL THE SCRAMBLE OF THE SQUIRRELS AS THEY START AGAIN THEIR ENDLESS JOB OF GATHERING NUTS. OH, I AM SURE THAT I CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF A RABBIT JUST NOW, AND DON'T THE MAY FLOWERS SMELL TOO LOVELY FOR WORDS? I CAN'T WASTE MY TIME SITTING HERE WRITING OF MY KINGDOM. I AM TOO MUCH A PART OF IT TO SIT PASSIVELY WHILE MY WHOLE WORLD IS BUSY AROUND ME. I TELL MYSELF THAT TOMORROW I WILL FINISH MY STORY AS I RUN THROUGH THE SUMACS TOWARD THE MAY FLOWER PATCH.

I FEEL SO SORRY FOR YOU, GROWN-UP. YOU ARE STANDING THERE SEDATELY AS NATURE IS VIBRANT WITH LIFE AROUND YOU. YOU SOMETIMES BECOME IRRITATED WITH MY ENDLESS AMOUNT OF ENERGY. HOW CAN YOU HELP BUT HAVE ENERGY WHEN ALL OF NATURE IS CALLING YOU TO FOLLOW, TO DISCOVER, TO LIVE! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? CAN'T YOU REMEMBER? YOU'RE HERE, ISN'T IT TOO WONDERFUL? THE AIR, THE SUN, THE DIRT AROUND YOU -- ALL WERE PUT HERE JUST FOR YOU. IT'S WHAT THEY CALL LIFE! LIFE! OH, IF I MUST GROW UP, LET ME NEVER FORGET THE SMELL OF WARM LEAVES, THE FASCINATION OF A BUMBLE BEE, THE SIMPLE ECSTASY AND EXPECTANCY IN A SPRING DAY!

*Sandra Stoos*